

**Glenwood Ranger District**

**Gila National Forest**

**ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS**

2016

Devils Park Allotment #427

**Prepared By:** /s/ DK Brown  
District Range Staff

**Date:** 01/14/2016

**Approved By:** /s/ Anne L. Casey  
District Ranger

**Date:** 01/14/2016

## Annual Operating Instructions

### I. INTRODUCTION

Kendall Brown (Forest Service) met with Danny Montoya (permittee) on January 14, 2016 to discuss management of the Devil's Park Allotment during the current grazing year and to plan grazing management for the upcoming grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions are the result of that discussion.

#### Term Permitted Livestock Numbers

Number and Class of Livestock	Dates
67 Cattle-Cow/Calf (Not to exceed 808 Animal Months)	03/01 – 02/28

#### Authorized Use:

Number and Class of Livestock	Dates
90 Cattle-Heifers	03/01 – 02/28
5 Cattle-Bulls	03/01 – 02/28

#### Pasture Rotation

Livestock Class	Rotation Date	Pasture
Heifers & Bulls	03/01 – 03/31	Frisco
Heifers & Bulls	04/01 – 07/15	Six-Bar
Heifers & Bulls	07/16 – 11/30	Devil's Park
Heifers & Bulls	12/01 – 02/28	Frisco
Heifers & Bulls	3/01 – 02/28	Horse Pasture (private land and FS pasture)*

\*Use for holding/hospital. Can be used throughout the year until utilization levels are met (35%).

The rotation schedule is not intended to identify specific dates for rotations but only to identify a general time frame. All rotations should be based on utilization or other resource objectives. The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. If there is a need to deviate from the above pasture rotation schedule by more than 15 days, you must notify the Ranger District of the proposed change in the pasture rotation date and the reason for the change. A deviation from the above schedule of more than 15 days must be approved verbally or in writing. Credit/Refund applications will not be processed unless District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time of removal of stock.

### II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

You are responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization. It is your responsibility to move your livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. You are responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of your livestock. In the event your livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, you will be required to find, gather, and return your animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible. Failure to maintain control of your livestock may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit.

### **III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE**

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in a functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify the Range Staff at the Glenwood Ranger District to schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available. I appreciate your willingness to maintain your improvements.

Priority range developments that we agreed to pursue are:

- Frying Pan well conversion to solar. The FS purchased materials for this conversion in 2013 and issued to the previous permittee. You state that you are in possession of these materials. Your plan is to complete this project in 2015.
- Reconstruction of fence # 3146, the Devil's Park Holding Pasture is the final improvement specified in the 2001 National Environmental Policy Act decision. You state this project was completed in Fall 2013, but that it has been elk damaged and needs fixing of ~200 yard section.
- Devil's Creek water point fence to be repaired/maintained. COMPLETED 2015.

Additional proposed range developments for 2015:

- Heavy maintenance/reconstruction on eastern boundary Devil's Park/Deep Creek & Negrito-Yeguas fence (Whitewater/Baldy Fire). COMPLETED 2105.
- Need to replace 2 drinkers, one on Frisco pipeline and one on Six-Bar pipeline. The district will supply 2 cut-tire drinkers for this project.

### **IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**1. Fire:** Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District may allow naturally ignited fires to burn on the district this coming year. We will notify you and solicit your input if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

**2. Records:** In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers such as dates of entering and leaving pastures. This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

**3. Heavy Equipment Use:** Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

**4. Credit/Refund:** Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal, prior to, or at the time, the livestock are taken off the allotment. You will be required to provide your Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

**6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:**

- a. Feeding of hay or other bulk feeds on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be **certified weed free** hay and you must provide the proper documentation.
- b. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks, molasses licks, etc on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.
- c. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use.

## V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

The Devils Park Allotment has sufficient NEPA and an Allotment Management Plan is in place. If you do not have a copy of these documents, please contact us. This AOI implements the NEPA decision.

## VI. OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

You indicated that you may be in favor of managed wildfire on your allotment. You will be notified if a wildfire occurs and your input will be solicited when management decisions are being made. The District Ranger will authorize necessary changes to this AOI to accommodate fire management.

## VII. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Keep track of conditions on your allotment and make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing.

## VIII. UTILIZATION MONITORING

You will be notified when monitoring is to be conducted on your allotment in order for you to be involved.

Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of utilization of forage plants within a pasture. When necessary, verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described in the following utilization categories.

Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category	Use of Forage by Weight	Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity
Light to no-use	< 30%	Only choice plants and areas show use: there is no use of poor forage plants.
Conservative	31-40%	Choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks: Areas more than a mile from water show little use: About on third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas.
Moderate	41-50%	Most of accessible range shows use: Key areas show patch appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants showing use: Grazing is noticeable in zone 1-1.5 miles from water.
Heavy	51-60%	Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas: Palatable shrubs show hedging: Key areas show a lack of seed stalks: Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1.5 miles from water.
Severe	61 +%	Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no stubble height): Shrubs are severely hedged: There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage: Areas over 1.5 miles from water lack stubble height.
Holechek, J.L. and D. Galt. 2000. Grazing Intensity Guidelines. Rangelands 22(3), pg 11-14.		

An allowable use of 20% is assigned to woody obligate riparian plant species. The measurement of woody riparian species will be conducted using the grazed/ungrazed plant method. The San Francisco River is excluded from livestock grazing.

If you observe utilization levels approaching moderate intensity (40% or greater use) you will need to take action for making changes to the grazing in that area. There are many actions that can be taken, such as pasture moves, locating your livestock on different waters, moving of salt and supplements, etc. We will work with you in order to insure that any actions taken are appropriate.

Utilization monitoring will normally coincide with pasture moves of livestock. The percent grazing use will be documented at that time. The following dates have been tentatively scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are strongly encouraged to participate in monitoring.

#### **Monitoring schedule**

<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Monitoring Date</b>	<b>Key Area or Pasture</b>
Frisco	04/01	Pasture wide
Six-Bar	08/01	Pasture wide
Devil's Park	12/01	Pasture wide

The San Francisco River will continue to be excluded to livestock grazing. River crossings have been occurring on private land over the past several years. If a need arises to cross cattle on a portion of the river that is Forest land, please contact this office for additional guidance.

Open and positive communications concerning all AOI content is encouraged. Feel free to contact Kendall Brown if you have any questions or concerns.

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District. Change requests should be made in advance so that field inspections (if necessary) can be conducted. Approval of changes to this AOI may be verbal or written, depending on the nature of the change requested. Verbal changes will be documented to your file for record keeping purposes. Failure to follow the direction provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).